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SOME RELATIONS BETWEEN THE WAR AND PSYCHOLOGY¹

By G. STANLEY HALL

There is a large sense in which psychological forces play the chief rôle in all wars. It is they that cause war, that carry it on, that make or wreck morale both in the army and at home, that determine victory or defeat in the field, and that are or ought to be the chief heirs of all war's results. Only when we understand and learn how to control them can the world be safe for peace. This is the goal to which we are slowly progressing, and though it is yet far off it was never so clear as now.

In the more definite field of psychology in the technical sense this country has set the world a new record in utilizing our science for military efficiency, and not only their colleagues but the nation and the world will realize more and more as the years pass, and the history of their various lines of activity is written up and evaluated, the homage due those who contributed to this great epoch-making work. Only when the history of American psychology is recorded in large terms will we realize the full significance of the work itself and the self-sacrifice with which it was undertaken by those who left academic halls to serve their country in utilizing psychology to help the war — Yerkes, Dodge, Scott, Thorndike, Watson, Stratton, Baird, Terman, and a long list of others who have so greatly extended the influence and increased the public service of our science. The time has not yet come to do full justice to this kind of work.

I am still less capable of treating my theme but can only tab off, without trying to amplify, a few impressions as follows:

.(a) There is a strong tendency after such a cataclysm to revert to first principles, to ask ourselves what human nature really is and also why civilization, which is only man's attempt to domesticate himself, does not seem to fit his nature or needs; and therefore how to so form society as to make human institutions, like the clothes in Carlyle's "Teufelsdröckh," fit better. We know that very slight if constantly acting psychological

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causes accumulate their effects and may cause great upheavals after generations, as e. g. some ascribe human migrations to slight salt shortage; and so in the social body, just as in the individual, even slight misfits between what is and what should be, between fact and wish, may produce serious results. Thus there is a tendency now to reevaluate, analyze, and reeducate the public soul which should be taken full advantage of.

Why is man such a fighter? Why all these reversions to primitive instincts against better insight, interest, humanity, religion? Only by knowing causes can we effect cures. Is not the persistence of war in the world a reproach to psychology as well as to sociological and economical insight?

(b) I think applied versus pure psychology has abundantly justified itself in this war. If there is such a thing as pure psychology, as we speak of pure mathematics, it is an iridescent dream of a goal that is yet very far off, or like the conception of pure soul apart from the body. Its practical domain is daily life. Psychology lives, moves, and has its being in explaining how and why human beings, especially man, sense the world and think, feel, and act in it, and our goal is to control these processes.

A generation ago it was a reproach to apply psychology even to education; now it is happily quite proper to apply it to business, love, religion, mental hygiene and the rest, and there is no concession of culture to *kultur* in so doing for in all these fields we have found vastly more facts than we can explain. Our science is in its dawn, and we have been mistaken in following analogies of physics and chemistry and seeking for psychic elements. We must not forget Aristotle's warning that it is amateurishness to affect a greater degree of exactness than the subject matter of science admits of. Biology, rather more than the sciences that deal with non-living matter, should be our basis, or more especially zoology, which explains the life of animals.

Our science is essentially pragmatic. Its criterion is service. Its supreme end is to teach how to get the most and very best out of life. It may help every science but it can never aspire to be a science apart and by itself, and its history is strewn with the wreckage of futile efforts to attain finalities and hyperexactitude. All such efforts help for a time but in the end retard. They make us feel that we have arrived when in fact we have only just started. Ours is the highest, largest, and most complex of all the sciences and will be the very last to approach completeness, which indeed it can never attain until man ceases to develop.

(1) The only purely pure psychology is that of ghosts—ghosts that have not even an astral body but the demonstration of whose existence has been complete as guaranteed pure from matter as if by some Lipmus test. They must not have corporeity enough to be blown about on a windy day like Plato's discarnate souls, they cannot be hermetically sealed up, and they may not even be limited to tridimensional space.

We cannot disembody souls in the laboratory, and so pure psychology seems to be next-world psychology. Moreover, if our souls, à la Plato, freely chose our bodies and our careers before birth it would be in some sense a violation of contract to investigate these purely spiritual bodies until after we die. If all the millions of souls freshly dead are organizing to cross the bourne from which no traveler returns, as Conan Doyle, Sir Oliver Lodge, and yet more tediously our own American Hyslop say they are doing, we ought to be receptive and show a decent loyalty to these battalions now organized to conquer the laws of matter themselves, and be ready to at least meet them halfway in their efforts to establish an *entente cordiale* with us.

If we only knew, too, when and where to put out our terro-pathic tentacles! But we are so enmeshed in flesh, so sarcastically conditioned that the purer they are the harder it is for us to get into *rapport* with them. This must not lead us to metaphysics, of which psychology has now far more reason to beware than physics ever had.

But seriously what is pure psychology? Is there and can there ever be such a thing? The answers to this question are flagrantly contradictory. Let us tab off a few of them.

The ultra-introspectors tell us that we must cut loose from physiology, and that to be pure it must be introgression or introversion. It is limited to the field of conscious awareness, and it emerges only as the result of a very technical and skilled process. When we approach the limitations of clearness and certainty we may refer our perplexities to "physiological processes" in general, but these are quite outside the field of true psychology. The purest of pure psychology would be bare of tropes and symbols, would transcend language itself, and be in fact nothing more or less than imageless thought, if there be such a thing.

It is on this that the Grail quest focuses, and not till this triply refined destination is found shall we have the true elixir *vitae animae*. Those who study the soul by somatic methods, or seek to gather psychic facts from animals, children, savages, the insane, social and business phenomena, etc., are not Simon pure psychologists but seek to enter the true

fold by forbidden ways. Only the ingrowing mind is truly psychological, and not consciousness but self-consciousness is the true muse for the psychologist to woo. This hypothesis, let it be freely confessed, has proved a very fruitful one and has made very material additions to science, but its limitations have become far more apparent as a result of the war. It is a movement which has passed its zenith anyway. Its fault was its fatal *ubris* that made it assume if not to be the exclusive method of psychology to be at least superior to all others in its methods and results.

(2) Its Nemesis was behaviorism, which went to the opposite extreme of attempting to evict consciousness entirely from psychology and make our science objective and descriptive. Like the Naples tropists it proposed a new nomenclature to be substituted for every process implying awareness. The prime data of psychology were secretions, hormones, excretions, assimilation and dissimilation, and other physiological processes. In addition to these come everything that can be called conduct, including not only acts but tendencies to action. Thus the stone which the introspective builders rejected became the chief stone in the structure of the behaviorists, and the pure psychology is consciousnessless. The soul is solely what it does in and with the body, and the physiological processes are all that we can study. Consciousness must be dethroned as a seductive hetera. Like the spirit of dulness that Pope invoked in his "Dunciad" consciousness, we are now told, is the basis of endless confusion and obfuscation, and it has been in short the evil genius of all who have studied the soul. Its business is to camouflage what really goes on in it. Thus its banishment will mark a new era.

(3) Psychoanalysis, too, impugns consciousness and finds the purest psychology in the unconscious; it makes consciousness a superficial manifestation of the real psyche. It has no hypothesis as to the relations of the body and the soul. It worked largely at first upon the abnormal, where nature and disease do their sad vivisections, but the center of gravity of its interest in the work is rapidly passing over to the normal. The mainsprings of all our psychic activities are found below the threshold. Psychopathology is chiefly used as a key to man's true nature, and finds certain subliminal mechanisms that radiate from hunger and love, which it would restore to their true dominance in human life. Thus consciousness is only the froth or sillibub which overlays man's deeper instincts, individual and social. Even philosophers must be analyzed just as symptoms and delusions are, and they are not understood until we find in them the deeper unconscious ten-

dencies of their age, their nation and their race, as well as their own individual experiences, of all of which they are the voice.

But all systems of psychic life are deciduous leaves which are for a time agents of growth of the tree of man's soul but which fall off when their service to the larger life of the tree itself is accomplished. Consciousness is thus symptomatic and symbolic of the larger instinctive soul that makes health or disease and brings weal or woe. Its web is a new veil of Maya; the picture is only the curtain yet to be raised before we can see the real interior. Consciousness is only a medieval masque or play which presented an underlying moral so richly dight with circumstance and incident that it was a little hard to find. The pure psychologist here is the interpreter of what man thinks he thinks, feels, and does into a more primeval language of what he really thinks, feels, and does. Thus it is somewhat akin to

(4) Geneticism which says of the soul, as Bleek did of language, *Sie ist was sie wird*. From this standpoint the soul is hoary with age, it puts on and sloughs off customs, cultures, and civilizations but remains itself but little changed. Its progress though very, very slow is sure. It stresses in the modern culture of man and society the outcrops and survivals of the instincts of animals, children and savages, notes the influences which arrest and facilitate development and evaluates them accordingly, and is keen to discern racial traits and memories. Its muse is the *élan vital*, growth, or nisus of evolution, but whatever it is (Nicolai says it is God in His only true and essential nature) it impels things upward and onward. This, at any rate, is the divinity of geneticism. It confesses its obligation to Darwinism, its watchword is development, and it values the results of all schools of philosophic thought, although it refuses to be bound by or confined within any of them for its genius is synthetic. It conceives psychology as a bud, not as a flower and still less as a fruit. It would touch life at every point, it would gather material from every field for nothing human is without interest to it. It is suspicious of definition but hungry for facts, and it respects all methods only in proportion as they yield them. It has nothing much to give but vastly more to learn, and it realizes that finalities are yet afar off. Its chief interest is in description and observation, under control of conditions if possible, but it finds precious and still more numerous data where nature and life alone make the conditions, as e. g. in this war.

Mathematics may be pure or applied. Astronomy, one

expert in which says it has contributed nothing of practical value to man for the last two centuries despite its vast progress, is certainly pure if purity means uselessness. There is a very real distinction between scientific and economic geology, botany, and zoology. Paleontology has rendered but little service to man in this sense. In physics and chemistry the distinction is sun-clear. Both tendencies are strong, and the appeal of each often causes real conflicts in the minds of their devotees. Competent and impartial opinion is pretty accordant that in all departments of knowledge that make both appeals it is pure science that is not only most worthy but in the long run the most profitable, because many if not most of the great discoveries preceded and made possible the great inventions. Pure science is one the world over and transcends the differences of race, nation, temperament, and is accepted always, everywhere, and by all, for it is above race and parties.

How far is this true of psychology? Most of it that can be called scientific in any strict sense it took over from physiology, and it has added perhaps a few laws of memory and association. What more has it that can be properly called a purely scientific criterion *semper, ubique, et ab omnibus*? True it has collected masses of invaluable facts by observation, on e. g. animals, but we have no theory of instinct and are divided as to whether they are tropisms or really psychic. We have voluminous data on mental abnormalities, but no one has yet explained hysteria, and there is no generally accepted basis of classification of psychopathic disorders. In the field of child study there are countless observations, but no one has yet attempted even to bring the facts together and we only partly know what they mean, while finality is very far off. The same is true, though in less degree, in anthropology, where the same facts are differently interpreted by the different schools. Think, too, of the wreckage of theory that strews the path of the history of our science beginning with the Greek conceptions of the soul at the time when the foundations of geometry were laid down as they still remain! Even within our own memory English associationism has been reconstructed and supplemented by the doctrine of apperception. We hear little of the psycho-physic law which once occupied such an important place in our textbooks, for it has given way to Herbart's mathematical constructions. Some two decades ago two of our leading American psychologists insisted that suggestion was the keyword to unlock about all the secrets of the soul, explaining even originality by it. Hardly a single decade ago Kraepelin carefully elaborated the schematization

of psychic abnormalities which, although our best clinicians had accepted it, began to crumble and is now recognized as hopelessly inadequate.

Hering, Simon, and Loeb tells us that the central thing in the soul is memory. Schopenhauer and the modern voluntarists thought it was will, while Horwicz and other moderns galore think feeling or affectivity is the basis of all. Somatologists from the old localization studies of Ferrier down to Crile make the brain and cortical processes supreme. Frohschammer thought the imagination the root of everything, and Baldwin has lately urged that the ultimate test of truth itself is beauty and says that the psychologist must learn to know the world *sub specie pulchritudinis*.

In this country at some institutions psychology means chiefly mental measurements and their correlations; at others it is introspection; at others it is the study of the self; at still others geneticism, and elsewhere behaviorism. The fact is our science is like Milton's tawny lion "pawing to get free" from the soil in which it grew, or rather it is like Rabelais' Gargantua, gigantic but infantile, appropriating everything in its reach but not yet skilled in using anything because its body is still in the gristle and is only suggestive of the unprecedented power it will possess when it matures. Long before that we and our best work will be transcended and superseded, and we shall be recalled only as crude and ancient pioneers, or forgotten as a missing link; for just as surely as the Delphic admonition to man to study himself, or Pope's slogan that the highest knowledge of mankind is man, or Tennyson's line that self-knowledge, self-reverence and self-control, these three alone lead man to sovereign power, will social psychology, if the latest and hardest of all the sciences, ultimately be supreme over them all.

When its *Tag*, which is only dawning, comes on Haeckel's cosmic clock, the day which young men's visions and old men's dreams already begin to anticipate, will psychology be pure only in proportion as it is practical, just as the soul is a part of and not apart from the body. At any rate the more perfect psychology I dream of will be the acme of humanism. Every human institution will be evaluated by the sole criterion of how much it advances the kingdom of man. On this scale of worths education, art, literature, language, industry, trade, statecraft, law, curative and preventive medicine, philosophy—in short every human institution and invention of man and even the special sciences themselves will be weighed, for the only true and ultimate values in the world are psychological values.

In a sense the youngest mathematician is thus an antiquarian, for the foundations of his science were laid thousands of years ago, while the oldest psychologist is only a tyro or neologist, since his science is even now in its birth throes. It should be the organizer and synthesizer *par excellence*, while it is now the analyzer and the divider, separating co-workers into sects and parties. Abstract science ought at least to organize the brain, for, we are told, it always seeks the easiest way of comprehending the universe; but psychology, which should show men not only how to think but how to act and even how to feel, has as its ultimate goal nothing less than the organization of the whole of life, and hence if we accept pragmatic sanctions it is the purest of all pure sciences because and in proportion as it is the most practical of all, for its sole quest is the facilitation of the dominion of Mansoul in work.

(c) The war has brought us face to face with the problem of feeling with which psychologists had only just begun to deal in earnest, save by way of schematization. We have learned, for instance, that the all-dominant motive, all the way from the first possibility of war to the draft and on to the charge itself, is fear, for courage is only fear controlled and cowardice is fear yielded to. Even shell shock, which is four times as common among officers, who must not only be brave but must set examples of courage to their men, and which rarely attacks men in action, is only fear abandoned to. Anger and rage, if they come, can themselves by their sthenic reinforcement most effectively suppress fear. Nearly all these numberless hysterical phenomena are only individual and not racial, and thus the anxiety that causes them has fundamentally nothing to do with sex so that the Freudian explanation of them collapses, although most of the mechanisms remain valid and apply to their development and their cause, as Babinski, Eder, Smith, MacCurdy, and many others clearly show. Every experience with shock from childhood on affects temibility, and if we can find a test to eliminate panic starters psychology would achieve another triumph.

To the question whether, and if so how and toward whom, we should cultivate hate for atrocities, as in the cry "Remember the Maine" or "the Lusitania," we have no answer. Again, we have not yet evaluated the new attitude toward death which has arisen from the war, in which millions of the fittest to survive have fallen.

So, too, while creeds, rites, and sects have crumbled psychology should show how true religion can and should have a rebirth from the humbler but fundamental virtues of the trenches: loyalty, comradeship in arms and in danger, devotion

even to death to a cause that so far transcends individual life that it is gladly surrendered. These are the phenomena which we see in the unique religious revival that has inspired the *poilus* and has grown to such proportions in the French army and at home.

What is honor? Personal, which is defined as the religion of the soldier, and especially national, which the treaties of the Hague refer to but have never defined. How is it lost and re-acquired? What is its true sphere and function, and how can it best be utilized?

So, too, of patriotism: Is there such a thing, is it a true sentiment, and if so of what is it composed? Can we draw a line between its defect and its excess in chauvinism and jingoism? How can it be cultivated? On what do racial attractions and antipathies rest, and is this correlated with successful interbreeding? It is feelings, emotions, and sentiments that are the dominant and determining factors in all these domains. Can psychology harvest all the vast crop of data which war gives before they decay and are forgotten, as feelings so soon are? "Out of the heart of the issues of life" might be the motto of war psychology, for pectoral or theumic phenomena constitute its very warp and woof, and its intellectual conscious phenomena are only laid-on patterns which camouflage what is going on under the threshold.

(d) We must not fail to garner the rich material in mass psychology and pathology offered by the war. Even more than the followers of Le Bon the school of Durkheim would have us believe that all great institutions, religion, language, myth, cult, and *mores* generally, were struck out not by individuals but by the collective folksoul under the influence of the calen-tures which characterize gregarious creatures when they get together, when the soul of each is expanded towards the dimensions of the soul of the group, thus deploying the higher powers of man. Now no human companionship begins to be so close as that of comradeship in arms, and in none is the individual so subordinated to the whole, like the cell in the larger organic unity. Here suggestion may become contagion, and rumor may grow beyond all bounds. There is the great problem, too, of the proper lines of censorship. Music and song, games and recreations, slogans, mottoes, watchwords, example and imitation are never so potent for good or ill.

All the psychological processes have their culminating expression in armies, which they weld into a solidarity which seems to be reversionary toward an antique type of mind and life that our age of rampant individuation has almost forgotten. Nicolai in his "Biology of War" tells us in substance

that consciousness of kind is the only true and living God, that the only true theology is anthropology, the only theocracy, democracy, and that if we could reinterpret the Divine and reduce it back into the human, of which it is really only a shattered projection, as Feuerbach and Comte vaguely try to do, we should realize that all men are, indeed brethren, that mankind is an organic unity and is itself the only true object of reverence, love, and worship, and then war would be impossible.

(e) Has not the war taught us in all these ways that the range of conscious awareness is limited and covers only a small part of the domain of psychology compared with the rôle played by the unconscious forces? Who that has argued with a maimed soldier, who felt either that he was down and out or else was of the type who assumed that he had done his heroic bit and that the world owed him a living without any further effort on his part to "carry on" and utilize all the powers he had left; or who that has cured a case of shell shock by making the victim of it understand his own latent mental processes and thus illustrated how consciousness is essentially remedial; or who that has observed the quick cure, surprising beyond all conception, effected on those malingering by discharge, by the end of the war, or even by being taken prisoner, can ever possibly doubt the potency of psychic processes, far outside the apperceptive focus, which the Wundtian school has made us so overemphasize! Even yet we know far too little of all those diseases that are mind-made and thus can be mind-cured.

How, too, about the so-called "adrenalin type" of soldier who, when he is fatigued to utter exhaustion, may be caught up and reenforced and fight on indefinitely because he cannot help it, as if he had suddenly tapped some great racial reservoir of energy, who can hardly remember afterwards what he did or what happened to him, even though he may continue to rehearse it later in dreams or in waking delusions.

Who doubts that unconscious factors were at least part causes of the war as well as of all that we call morale. The arbitrarily isolated and tiny sections of psychic life which we study under the arbitrarily controlled conditions of the laboratory must not give us a tonic cramp of apperception upon an object so small that we lose *empfindung* for the larger perspective of life. Is it entirely commendable for psychologists to keep at their old tasks as if this unprecedented psychic storm had not swept over the earth, rather than respond to the call of these wild elements that are revealing so many new aspects of human nature because some of them are *Bewusstseinsunfähig*? It would seem that psychologists who had not lost

touch with life and mind would be more interested in this subject than in any other.

(f) As we have put far more psychology into the war than any other nation, and as we have led in injecting it into education and business, as witnessed by the efficiency movement, corporation schools and vocational guidance, we ought now to assume a new world leadership in this field. We took the laboratory movement from Wundt and now have more academic equipment for experimental psychology than all the rest of the world combined. We took the post-Wundtian introspection from Wurzburg and have greatly enlarged the scope and enriched its results. The Binet-Simon method we took over from France and carried it far beyond the wildest dream of its founders. Behaviorism originated with Paulsen, Bechterew and other scientists, child study came from Preyer, the questionnaire method in schools from Lazarus, and psychoanalysis, which is barely heard of in our association, has a group of enthusiastic psychiatric disciples who have contributed many interesting cases but so far have done little that is constructive. We are still too pre-evolutionary to venture much into the field of heredity and eugenics and to evaluate hunger or sex, the two taproots of psychic life, and we make almost as little use of anthropological as we do of psychopathological, social, and religious results.

Thus everything summons us to a very new, serious, and deep and wide orientation, and also to a new world leadership and a higher quality of originality. Only in certain limited parts of the field has our psychology escaped the mechanical and racial *tendenziös* influences which only the exact sciences are able to transcend. Wundt was a physicist and physiologist before he was a psychologist, and he has never escaped the obsessions of physical methods, instruments, and even goals. Thus he to some extent has represented a dehumanizing *Kultur* trend that his more humanistic *Völkerpsychologie* has not entirely compensated for, while his successors with their hyperanalysis, which makes almost any synthesis never so hard although never so needed, and their hypermethodic ways tend to discredit the insight and intuition which is the mainspring of all creative evolution and which, as Plato said, students of the soul must never lose sight of. Must we then not look more critically at and accept with increasing reservations in the future certain influences of our Teutonic co-workers, even though we may and ought to forgive the ninety-three of them who signed the notorious manifesto of October, 1914, which Nicolai, a professor of physiology in Berlin, calls "the most notorious scandal of science."

What we need and want above and beyond all things else are psychological facts in whatever field and by whatever method, and next their evaluation and especially their synthesis, for psychology ought now to enter upon a new synthetic stage. Has not the time also now come to relegate either to the past of metaphysics or to the future as premature such unanswerable problems as those of parallelism and interaction, the Lange-James paradox, the ipsissimal self, freedom and necessity, and apply our energies to problems that are today capable of solution?

(g) For one I do not find the true substitute for war in James or any of the six candidates lately brought forward but rather in the conquest of nature. Man has subdued animals, domesticated himself in civilization, and is now learning to subject to his use the vast powers of inanimate nature at such a rate that a French physicist estimates that each of the one and one-half billion people on the earth today controls eight times the energy that he did a century ago. The earth, we are told, could soon be made to yield some thousands of times as much food as now, and could support a thousand times its present population. The forces of nature and of life are practically inexhaustible, and to command them by science and invention is now the real struggle for existence. A term translated and interpreted as *Kampf ums Dasein* by Darwin's followers had the disastrous consequences of Nietzscheism and Bernhardism, while the other half truth of Darwinism—cooperation—stated with equal one-sidedness by Kropotkin, Novikoff and other Russians has led to an equally disastrous Bolshevism. Compared with this long struggle of man to dominate nature even this vast war is but an alley brawl, although if all its energies had been turned toward the research and control of the sources of energy, instead of regressing the kingdom of man might have been materially advanced.

With this recent eight-fold augmentation of power should go responsibility, for otherwise what guarantees have we that it will be used for human weal rather than woe, that it may not be for the advantage of men like Hubert, who invented asphyxiating gases, rather than for men like Emil Fischer, who has made sugar in his laboratory and in so far has taken a momentous step to free man from his dependence upon plant life for sustenance. Such safeguards it is up to psychology in its department of morality to erect.

Again, the war has caused an unparalleled outburst of psychic energy. In less than two years this most peaceful of lands has created four million soldiers and equipped them, made all their accoutrements and sent half of them across

the sea, and turned the scale of victory against the strongest military force in the world, one hundred years in the building. We have speeded up almost every kind of industrial work, and many of our soldiers have even learned French "over there" at a rate that puts to shame the slow pace of our schools. All this shows anew that man's soul, like nature, honors far vaster drafts upon it than we have hitherto presumed, and that there are new and unused capacities that should be utilized for education and should be explored by psychologists.

As for man in general the substitute for war is to control nature, so for psychologists it is to know and control psychic energies, which not merely cause war and peace but make all our lives their sport. We have lived to learn how the psyche controls health and disease in the individual, but we have yet to learn how the collective psyche makes or mars all the processes of civilization. Here, then, we have a new call. The argument for it runs roughly thus:—We were the first great democracy or government of, for, and by the people, and if the voice of the people be in any sense the voice of God a true democracy tends toward becoming a real theocracy. Now we have done much to win the great struggle which has made the world democratic, and thus we have come to a new world leadership. The success of this democratic leadership depends upon education, and practical and sound education is based on the natural powers, instincts and aptitudes of children, youth, and adults. Therefore the future of the world depends as never before on what human nature is really found to be. On this the entire future of the race is staked, and to thus rightly conceive and develop human nature is the special task of psychology and should give it a new priority in the world.

Thus there is a large sense in which the race is coming to depend as never before upon the truth and adequacy of our appreciation of the fundamental nature, needs, and possibilities of man, how to know him aright and to bring him to an ever more complete maturity.